

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1502

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ELECTIONS: FOURTEEN PARTIES FILE TO COMPETE

REF: LISBON 1455 (DTG 081158Z MAR 76)

SUMMARY: FOURTEEN PARTIES MET THE MAR 8 DEADLINE FOR FILING
IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THE SOCIALIST PARTY
FAILED TO INCLUDE EITHER PPD DISSIDENTS OR EX-MES MEMBERS ON ITS
LISTS. THE PPD WAS UNABLE TO PUT TOGETHER LISTS WITH NAMES OF
NATIONAL STATURE COMPARABLE TO THOSE ON THE PS LISTS; THE DEFECTON
OF THE PPD'S LEFT WING OBVIOUSLY HURT. BOTH THE PPD AND THE CDS
MADE A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO INCLUDE FARMERS AND RETURNEES
ON THEIR SLATES IN THE RURAL NORTH. THE COMMUNISTS INCLUDED
A NUMBER OF MDP MEMBERS AS "INDEPENDENTS" IN AN EFFORT TO
SOP UP THE MDP VOTE. END SUMMARY.

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1. FOURTEEN POLITICAL PARTIES MET THE MIDNIGHT MAR 8 DEADLINE FOR FILING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. AMONG THE MAJOR PARTIES, THE SOCIALISTS, THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS, AND THE COMMUNISTS, PRESENTED CANDIDATES IN ALL 22 DISTRICTS. THE CENTER DEMOCRATS WILL RUN CANDIDATES IN 17 DISTRICTS. OBSERVATIONS ON THE MAJOR PARTY LISTS FOLLOW.

2. SOCIALISTS: AS EXPECTED, THE PS LISTS WERE HEADED BY MARIO SOARES IN LISBON; FINANCE MINISTER SALGADO ZENHA IN OPORTO; AND THE AGRICULTURE MINISTER LOPEZ CARDOSO IN BEJA. OF SPECIAL NOTE WAS:

-- LARGE NUMBER OF WELL- KNOWN NATIONAL FIGURES, INCLUDING MOST OF PS NATIONAL SECRETARIAT AND MOST OF PS MEMBERS OF SIXTH GOVERNMENT.

-- ABSENCE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (EX-PPD) AND SOCIALIST INTERVENTION GROUP (EX-MES) MEMBERS.

-- PRESENCE OF RUI VILAR, RESPECTED FORMER MINISTER OF ECONOMY, AS ONLY INDEPENDENT.

-- ABSENCE OF HENRIQUE BARROS, PARTY ELDER STATESMAN AND HIGHLY REGARDED PRESIDENT OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. HE HAS DECIDED TO RETIRE FROM ACTIVE POLITICS.

3. POPULAR DEMOCRATS: PPD LISTS ARE HEADED BY SECRETARY GENERAL SA CARNEIRO IN OPORTO; INTERNAL COMMERCE MINISTER MAGALHAES MOTA IN LISBON; AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS MINISTER RUI MACHETE IN SETUBAL. NOTABLE FEATURES INCLUDED:

-- THE PPD LISTS, PARTICULARLY WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PS LIST, LACKED NATIONALLY KNOWN FIGURES. THE DEFECTION OF PARTY'S LEFT WING OBVIOUSLY HURT, PARTICULARLY IN LISBON AND OPORTO, AS DID THE DECISION OF "EXPRESSO" EDITORS PINTO BALSEMAO AND MARCELO REBELO DE SOUSA TO DECLINE SPOTS ON LISBON SLATE.

-- PPD INCLUDED ONLY ONE INDEPENDENT ON ITS LISTS AND PARTY MEMBERSHIP OF THIS INDIVIDUAL IS ALREADY BEING PROCESSED. THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTY MADE A CONSCIOUS DECISION NOT TO INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF RETURNEES AND OTHER INTEREST GROUPS WHO WERE NOT ALREADY PPD MEMBERS.

-- ALTHOUGH A HIGH PROPORTION OF THE PPD CANDIDATES ARE PROFESSIONAL MEN, A NUMBER OF FARMERS AND RETURNEES WERE ALSO INCLUDED ON LISTS IN THE RURAL NORTH.

4. CENTER DEMOCRATS: CDS PRESIDENT DIOGO FREITAS DO AMARAL HEADED THE LIST IN LISBON. AMARO DA COSTA AND BASILIO HORTA HEAD THE LISTS IN OPORTO AND BRAGA. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES INCLUDED:

-- RETIRED GEN GALVAO DE MELO, AT TOP OF VISEU LIST, WAS ONLY INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE. SEVERAL OTHER RETIRED MILITARY MEN WHO ARE CDS MEMBERS WERE ALSO INCLUDED.

-- OTHER THAN THE PARTY'S TOP LEADERSHIP AND GALVAO DE MELO, THE CDS LISTS HAD FEW NATIONALLY KNOWN FIGURES. THE PARTY'S ABSENCE FROM THE GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTED TO THE RECOGNITION PROBLEM.

-- THE LEADING POSITIONS IN VIRTUALLY EVERY LIST ARE FILLED BY PROFESSIONALS OR BUSINESSMEN, BUT FARMERS WERE PLACED HIGH ON THE LISTS IN BEJA AND VILA REAL.

-- POMPILIO DA CRUZ, PRESIDENT OF THE INDEPENDENT SOCIAL CENTER, THE RECENTLY-FORMED RETURNEE POLITICAL ACTION GROUP, WAS INCLUDED ON SETUBAL LIST.

5. THE COMMUNISTS: THE PCP LISBON LIST, AS EXPECTED, WAS HEADED BY PARTY LEADER CUNHAL AND ALSO INCLUDED CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS CARLOS BRITO; JOSE MAGRO; AND CARLOS ABOIM INGLES. OCTAVIO PATO HEADED THE PCP LIST IN SANTAREM. THE MOST STRIKING FEATURE OF THE PCP LISTS, HOWEVER, WAS THE INCLUSION OF ELEVEN "INDEPENDENTS." FIVE OF THE ELEVEN WERE IDENTIFIABLE AS MDP MEMBERS. THREE WILL RUN IN VIANA DO CASTELO, BRAGA, AND GUARDA, RESPECTIVELY, WHERE THE MDP POLLED ALMOST AS WELL OR BETTER THAN THE PCP IN 1975. THE OTHER TWO MDP MEMBERS ARE WELL DOWN ON THE PCP LISTS AND APPEAR TO BE FILLERS.

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6. COMMENT: THE SOCIALISTS, BENEFITING FROM MORE POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT AND BETTER MEDIA EXPOSURE, HAVE PRESENTED LISTS STUDDED WITH NATIONALLY PROMINENT NAMES. THE PPD, WITH FEWER INDIVIDUALS OF NATIONAL STATURE, HAS BEEN FORCED TO PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS UPON LOCAL LEADERS AND PARTY CADRES. THE INCLUSION OF FARMERS AND RETURNEES ON ITS LISTS IN THE RURAL NORTH IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PPD STRATEGY OF ATTEMPTING TO MAKE INROADS INTO THESE POTENTIAL SOURCES OF CONSERVATIVE STRENGTH. THE CDS, EVEN MORE THAN THE PPD, IS HAMPERED BY THE LACK OF NATIONALLY-KNOWN LEADERS. THE CDS, COMPETING FOR MUCH THE SAME ELECTORATE AS THE PPD, HAS GONE EVEN FURTHER THAN THE PPD IN SEEKING TO APPEAL TO RETURNEES AND FARMERS THROUGH THE INCLUSION OF THEIR SPOKESMEN ON CDS SLATES. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE GENERALLY PLACED THEIR TOP LEADERSHIP IN THE MOST SECURE DISTRICTS, WHILE SEEKING THROUGH THE JUDICIOUS USE OF MDP "INDEPENDENTS" TO SOP UP THE MDP VOTE IN THOSE AREAS

WHERE THE MDP HAD SOME SUPPORT IN 1975, WHILE USING OTHER
MDP CANDIDATES AS FILLERS IN DISTRICTS WHERE THE PCP HAS
LITTLE CHANCE. USE OF BIG NAMES IS NO GUARANTEE OF PS SUCCESS,
HOWEVER, AS VOTING IS FOR THE PARTY AND NOT FOR INDIVIDUALS.
PRESENCE OF THE CONTROVERSIAL SOCIALIST MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
AT THE HEAD OF A LIST WILL NOT HELP PS IN CONSERVATIVE FARM
AREAS.
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